

REVIEWS.

A TREATISE ON DISEASES OF THE SKIN. For the Use of Advanced Students and Practitioners. By HENRY W. STELWAGON, M.D., Ph.D., Clinical Professor of Dermatology, Jefferson Medical College and Woman's Medical College, Philadelphia; Dermatologist to the Howard and Philadelphia Hospitals. In one octavo volume of 1125 pages, with 220 text illustrations and 26 full-page lithographic and half-tone plates. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders & Co., 1902.

THE avowed purpose of the author in writing this book was to produce a practical treatise upon dermatology which should be useful to the general practitioner as a guide in the recognition and treatment of diseases of the skin as seen in his daily practice, and a careful survey of this imposing volume of more than a thousand pages has convinced us that he has performed his difficult task with more than ordinary success. While the scientific portion of the subject is by no means neglected, etiology and pathology being given due consideration, the more practical matters of diagnosis and treatment are especially emphasized and treated at great length. As being the very alphabet of diagnosis, the primary and secondary lesions of diseases of the skin are described with unusual care. The section upon General Diagnosis seems to us especially worthy of notice as containing many useful hints upon the recognition of cutaneous diseases; it well repays reading. We note that special importance is attributed to the distribution of cutaneous eruptions as affording very valuable aid in diagnosis, a point which is not sufficiently emphasized in many text-books. We also observe that the author is not inclined to attach too much importance to the history of cases as obtained from the patient, believing that it is often misleading; and this is in entire accord with our own experience, which has convinced us that the history as ordinarily given is just as likely to lead away from as toward a correct diagnosis. Indeed, we have long felt that errors will frequently be avoided by relying upon the objective symptoms alone, disregarding the history. In the sections devoted to treatment the numerous remedies useful in the various diseases are not merely enumerated, as is sometimes the case, but a wealth of detail is given as to the manner of employing them—a matter of quite as much importance as the selection of the remedies themselves.

On account of the absence of any entirely satisfactory classification of diseases of the skin, the author was at first inclined to go around the difficulty by adopting the alphabetical arrangement provisionally used by the American Dermatological Association and employed in a number of the more recent text-books, notably those of French authorship; but upon due reflection he concluded that some system of classification, even though imperfect, was desirable for teaching purposes, and adopted the well-known pathologico-anatomical system of Hebra as modified by

more recent authors. This system, although admittedly open to criticism at many points, is, perhaps, in the present state of our knowledge, the most practical yet devised. The ideal scientific system would be one based upon etiology, but the gaps in our knowledge of the causes of disease are yet too many and too wide to make such a system practicable; but it is not too much to hope that the present enormous activity in every department of medical research will, in the near future, make possible a reasonably successful attempt at such a classification.

Eczema is held to be a catarrhal inflammation of the skin, due to a great variety of causes, internal and external. The micro-organisms present are not believed to bear any pathogenetic relation to the primary lesions of the disease. We are glad to notice that the term "parasitic eczema," employed by some authors to designate those forms of the affection characterized by rounded marginate patches, finds no favor. It is considered a "vague term;" we would go further and say that it is quite indefensible, since no special organism has yet been demonstrated in these cases; and without such demonstration the use of the term is without warrant. The term tuberculous as applied to the eczemas occurring about the mouth, eyes, ears, and nose in strumous children is also believed by the author to be used without sufficient foundation. Treatment is considered at length, and the safe middle ground is taken that, for the successful management of this extremely frequent and very important disease, both constitutional and local remedies are necessary. The section upon Constitutional Treatment begins with the statement that this does not mean the employment of drugs alone, but includes the regulation of the diet and all other hygienic measures which conduce to the patient's health, a statement which we commend to the thoughtful consideration of the young practitioner and some old ones as well. It is pointed out that there are no specifics for eczema, and that the internal treatment must be carefully adapted to the individual case. Among many other local remedies, the gelatin preparations, as recommended by Pick, Unna, and others, are considered of great value.

All the forms of impetigo are stated to be contagious, and the several clinical varieties are described under the one title, *impetigo contagiosa*, the author believing that, while not scientifically exact, this manner of treating the subject is the most practical. The view that the affection is due, in most cases, to ordinary pus cocci is accepted, although it is also stated that other micro-organisms may occasionally give rise to it. We do not believe that future investigation will confirm this view; we believe the disease will be found to be due to a special micro-organism.

In no class of affections is the tremendous advance of our knowledge of the etiology and pathology of cutaneous diseases in the past two decades more apparent than in the tubercloses of the skin. Picking up the last edition, published twenty years ago, of what was by common consent the best text-book upon diseases of the skin in the English language at that time, we find a half-page given to tuberculosis of the skin. In this treatise no less than forty pages are devoted to this most important subject. The considerable number of eruptions known as *scrofulodermata* at last here find their proper place after having been treated so long as maladies due to a peculiar indefinable something called *struma*.

We are glad to see that some account, even though brief, is given in

a supplementary section, of some of the commoner diseases of the mucous membranes adjoining the skin. We have long thought that text-books upon dermatology should include a description of those diseases of the mucous membranes which are associated in a certain proportion of cases with cutaneous eruptions, as well as of those independent affections which are most apt to come under the observation of the dermatologist.

To the specialist in diseases of the skin one of the most valuable features of the book is the abundant references to dermatological literature which appear on every page. These must prove of great value to every worker in this field of medicine, and ought to insure the volume a place in the library of every student of dermatology.

This review would be glaringly incomplete without some reference to the beautiful illustrations which abound throughout the volume. These consist of reproductions of photographs and colored plates. The former are especially deserving of notice, since they are, with but few exceptions, unusually fine, and add much to the value of the treatise as a text-book.

In conclusion, we believe this to be one of the best books upon the subject in the language, a clear, practical exposition of dermatology as it exists to-day.

M. B. H.

A MANUAL OF SURGICAL TREATMENT. By WATSON CHEYNE, M.B., F.R.C.S., F.R.S., Professor of Surgery in King's College, London, and F. F. BURGHARD, M.D., M.S., F.R.C.S., Teacher of Practical Surgery in King's College, London. Vol. VI. Philadelphia and New York: Lea Brothers & Co.

IN this the sixth volume of the *Manual of Surgical Treatment*, Cheyne and Burghard discuss the surgery of the tongue and floor of the mouth, the pharynx, the neck, and the œsophagus, and also some of the surgical diseases of the abdomen. It is important to note that they entirely condemn the division of the frænum, so often practised on infants for tongue-tie. They say that in the majority of cases such an operation is unnecessary, because the frænum lengthens as the child advances in years; and besides this, the operation may be followed by a scar, which anchors the tip of the tongue. When it is absolutely necessary to divide it, they make a transverse slit close to the symphysis of the jaw, pull up the tip of the organ, and thus convert the transverse cut into a lozenge-shaped area; and they put two fine catgut stitches between the lateral angles of the lozenge, so as to prevent the formation of a broad granulating surface.

The chapter on Cancer of the Tongue is admirable, and many important facts of which the authors have themselves made a careful study are pointed out. It is an interesting fact that in cancer of the tongue, whereas the lymphatic glands beneath the jaw soon become involved, the lymphatic vessels themselves are not involved to anything like the extent that the lymph tract between the axilla and the breast is involved in cancer of the breast. Large cancer cells travel through the lymphatics from the tongue to the neck without being arrested on the way, and the lymph tract between the tongue and the glands is affected